

## How can being a *Certified Lead-Safe Company* protect my business?

**Avoid Lawsuits:** Lead-safe companies have greater protection from liability for lead poisonings because they employ trained and certified workers who use lead-safe work methods. Recent decisions by both the Wisconsin Supreme Court and U.S. District Court for Eastern Wisconsin ruled that there is no legal defense for not knowing about the dangers of lead in paint.

**Prevent OSHA Penalties:** A Madison painting contractor was fined \$4,200 by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for failing to protect workers during lead paint removal. Certified lead-safe companies avoid these penalties by working lead-safe and protecting both workers and occupants.

**Avoid Costs of Environmental & Health Hazard Clean-up:** Recently, a Wisconsin landlord was ordered to pay for clean-up resulting from improperly disturbing lead-based paint during renovation. Estimates for the clean-up ranged as high as \$20,000! Certified lead-safe companies use work practices that protect both human and environmental health and, as a result, avoid costly clean-up orders.

## Where can I get more information?

For more information about these topics, including a list of training providers and application forms, contact the Asbestos and Lead Section.

- ✓ Internet: [dhfs.wisconsin.gov/lead](http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/lead)
- ✓ Email: [plicasbestoslead@dhfs.state.wi.us](mailto:plicasbestoslead@dhfs.state.wi.us)
- ✓ Telephone: 608-261-6876

**If not conducted lead-safe,  
renovations release toxic lead from  
paint and dust into the family's home**

## The advantages of becoming a *Lead-Safe Company*

There are many benefits for Wisconsin contractors that become certified lead-safe companies. This brochure explains the benefits for:

- ✓ Residential remodeling contractors
- ✓ Painters
- ✓ Flooring and woodwork refinishers
- ✓ Window-replacement specialists
- ✓ Carpenters and cabinet installers
- ✓ Roofers
- ✓ Maintenance crews
- ✓ Plumbers and electricians
- ✓ Other professionals who disturb paint in housing built before 1978

Asbestos and Lead Section  
Bureau of Occupational Health  
Division of Public Health  
Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services

## What is a *Certified Lead-Safe Company*?

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services grants *lead-safe* certification to companies that use only certified workers who follow lead-safe practices when doing work that disturbs paint in housing built before 1978. Residential lead-based paint was banned in 1978.

## What does a *Certified Lead-Safe Company* do?

Certified *lead-safe* companies use special work practices to protect people and their homes from lead dust created when paint is disturbed. Renovation and repair work can create *large* amounts of harmful lead dust.

Lead-safe workers use plastic sheeting to protect floors and furnishings, reduce the amount of dust created, bag or wrap waste, and thoroughly clean work areas daily and at the end of the project.



## How can being a *Certified Lead-Safe Company* increase my 'bottom line'?

You can bid on projects that *require* lead-safe workers such as:

- ✓ Renovate federally assisted housing. (The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has spent over \$650 million on residential lead-hazard reduction projects since 1993.)
- ✓ Work in registered **lead-safe** housing in Wisconsin.

Certified companies may also:

- ✓ Be listed on the Department online directory of companies offering lead-safe services. (The website is viewed over 1,000 times per month.)
- ✓ Use certification in advertising to attract business.
- ✓ Be more appealing to clients:
  - clearly identify the measures you will take to protect the client's family from lead dangers,
  - educate clients about the importance of *lead-safe* work in protecting their home and family from lead-dust contamination,
  - explain the potentially harmful consequences of using *uncertified* contractors to do work that disturbs lead paint.



**Working *clean* is the key to working *lead-safe***

## Two steps to becoming a *Certified Lead-Safe Company*

First, become or employ a *certified* lead-safe worker, lead abatement worker or supervisor.

- ✓ Complete a 1-day Department-accredited lead-safe work course. Or, also complete the lead abatement worker and supervisor courses (1-3 additional days).
- ✓ Submit an application for "lead-safe worker" certification with a one-time \$50 fee. Or, apply for lead abatement worker or supervisor based on the training you complete. (Lead abatement supervisors must also meet additional experience requirements and pass a state exam.)



Second, become a *certified* lead-safe company by submitting a company certification application with \$75 for a 2-year certification period.

## How will being a *Certified Lead-Safe Company* help protect my health and the health of my family?

Certified lead-safe workers create less lead dust during work. Lead-safe workers decontaminate themselves, their clothing, shoes and tools before going home each day. These work practices protect their own health and also protect their families from potential "take home" lead.

## Why is lead so harmful?

Lead poisoning often has no obvious symptoms, yet it can damage nearly every system in the body. Lead poisoning causes brain damage, learning disabilities and behavioral problems. High lead levels can cause seizures, coma, and even death.

The major source for children is lead-based paint and lead-dust in their homes. Children under 6 are most at risk because they are growing rapidly, their brains are still developing, and they tend to put their hands and other objects into their mouths. It takes only a *tiny* amount of lead dust to poison a child.



Home remodeling and furniture restoration are *high-risk* occupations for lead poisoning. Adults with high lead levels can experience anemia, nervous system problems (tremors and balance), kidney problems, high blood pressure, miscarriages, fertility problems and loss of libido.